



101 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-3494

League of Innovative Schools

Eleven years ago, **Campbell High School** was the first secondary school in the State of New Hampshire to adopt a competency-based learning system—that is, an academic program in which students must demonstrate they have acquired essential skills and knowledge before they can move on. The competency-based system helped the school create new and more diverse learning opportunities for all students. Competencies also help students prepare for success in the 21st century by cultivating the behaviors, attitudes, and higher-order thinking skills that are not only necessary, but expected, in today's increasing globalized workplaces.

Even though the **Great Bay eLearning Charter School** is a small, supportive, close-knit community, the school doesn't leave individual attention to chance. The school uses research-based strategies to create personalized learning experiences for every student that takes into account individual learning needs, interests, and future aspirations, which can dramatically improve student engagement, knowledge acquisition, and educational outcomes.

At **Kearsarge Regional High School** students in Freshman and Sophomore teams are assigned the same teachers, case manager, guidance counselor and assistant principal. This group of educators meet once a week to discuss student concerns. They talk about struggling students and proven strategies available to help improve performance. They believe this team approach has made a huge difference in student achievement. These teams are inclusive, however there is an honors designation for students who want to take their learning further. For example there may be quizzes and tests that have open ended questions that require higher level thinking skills. KRHS is a recipient of an Investing in Innovation Fund (i3) Grant to support local efforts to start or expand research-based innovative programs that help close the achievement gap and improve outcomes for high-need students. With this grant they have established inquiry based learning of topics that are relevant to students.

Pittsfield Middle High School has worked to create a more student-centered learning environment in which students are given the opportunity to take greater ownership over their educational journey. Using strategies such as a high-impact advisory program (regular meetings of students and adults in the school), personal learning plans (detailed plans that students create to help them achieve their educational, career, and life goals), and student-led conferences (parent-teacher conferences designed by students during which they present their learning progress), Pittsfield has been able to create a more successful educational experience for more students.

The **Virtual Learning Academy Charter School**—a virtual high school based in New Hampshire—offers more than eighty courses, including college courses, to students across New Hampshire and New England. The school's anytime-anywhere learning environment provides flexible, personalized instruction that includes consistent one-to-one relationships with 110 teachers from eight different states. Approximately two-thirds of the 8,600 course enrollments come from traditional public schools.

2010 Blue Ribbon Schools

The **Bath Village School** serves students in grades K-6 with an average student population of 65 to 75 students. Bath's school district mission states that children are our most valuable asset and the development of their diverse capabilities, skills, competencies and values are their primary responsibility. They recognize that children are born with different capabilities to learn and grow.

Bath's classrooms are self-contained and class sizes are small, which makes it possible for teachers to adjust their schedules and modify instruction to meet the individual needs of their students. The teachers make it a primary focus to differentiate instruction and to accommodate the needs of their students. The Special Education teacher works closely with classroom teachers to provide support in the classroom in a team teaching approach. They also utilize a pre-referral process to make sure all practical interventions for a student have been attempted before they are referred for special education. If a student is still presenting difficulties they see to it that they are receiving the appropriate remedial instruction and accommodations necessary to assure their success despite a particular disability.

Despite this small rural setting and the fact that over 40% of students are eligible for free and reduced meals, students are performing at or above the state average based on state test scores. They have all of the elements necessary for a successful school; community involvement, an excellent faculty whose average length of employment is 10 years or more, small class size, and student access to current technology that includes 30 laptops, three or four computers in every classroom, an eight-unit computer lab and promethean boards in every classroom. Every teacher has their own laptop and media cart that includes a projector and sound system. All of these elements are major factors in student success.

Hollis Brookline High School has a student population of 900 students representing the towns of Brookline and Hollis. Together these two communities unite and partner to endorse educational excellence. This vibrant and active school's mission is to inspire lifelong learning. They provide a broad range of experiences to encourage each and every student to reach their maximum intellectual, artistic, social/emotional and physical development. Essential to the educational process is a core belief and commitment that values trust, respect, and integrity in the educational environment. The talented and dedicated staff at HBHS works diligently to provide a rigorous and vibrant academic program to enable every student to reach their absolute potential.

2011 Blue Ribbon School

The **Sandown North Elementary School** is comprised of grades K-3 with almost 300 students. Under the leadership of Principal Jo-Ann Georgian the school focuses on teamwork, leadership and passion in order to inspire the entire school community to reach their fullest potential. Ongoing communication is a key factor in promoting and engaging, positive culture for student learning and academic success. The staff has strived since day one to work together to provide students with the best possible learning environment. This has also led to high scores on assessment tests. The mission of the Sandown North Elementary School is "Challenging learners to succeed in a respectful environment."

Nominated for 2012

Memorial School in Bedford serves 530 pre-school through fourth grade students. The Bedford community places a high degree of importance on education. Parents and community members have high expectations for student achievement and show strong support for the school system. Memorial School embraces the district mission: "To develop a community of learners who are intellectually curious, resourceful, and respectful of self and others." Academic achievement, through constantly improving standards, is the highest priority.

One of Memorial's strengths is that the students believe that they are writers, scientists, readers, mathematicians, artists, musicians, athletes, and leaders. Students are excited about learning new things and persist in working through challenging tasks. The school culture, a rigorous curriculum, excellent instruction, and strong parent involvement all contribute to student success. Strong leadership, collaboration and teamwork are integral to success at Memorial School. Innovation as well as implementation of best practices contribute to Memorial School's ability to make annual yearly progress (AYP) and for their disaggregated groups of students to consistently perform about the state average based on the NECAP test scores. Memorial celebrates its students' passion for learning and continued high levels of performance.

Lisbon Regional Middle School (LRMS) is a small, rural school located in the White Mountains of Northern New Hampshire. This small sized and total K-12 configuration promote a family atmosphere in which everyone supports one another, providing the staff the opportunity for a great deal of vertical articulation. Teachers have the opportunity to align curriculum throughout grades K-12 to provide a smooth transition for their students as they move through Lisbon's system. Their size also enables them to personalize learning. Students do not fall between the cracks; they know their children and closely track their behaviors and grades. They hold intervention team meetings weekly and parent meetings whenever any individual student's grades fall or behavior is questionable. Their efforts provide them the ability to match appropriate interventions with any deficiencies. The expected result is reducing or eliminating the gap between the entire population and their subgroups of students. One accomplishment about which they are most excited is how successful they have been at moving their students out of the lowest level on the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP). This upward movement adds to their already impressive percentage of students performing at the proficient level or above on the NECAPs.

Canterbury Elementary School strives to create a respectful learning environment that offers the community diverse educational opportunities to develop lifelong learners and critical thinkers so that students will have the knowledge and skills to become responsible and productive citizens who will achieve individual success and contribute to their local and global society. They believe a child's education is a team effort that requires the dedicated efforts of staff, students, parents and the community. The staff of CES recognizes each child as a unique individual. They strive to provide each student with the opportunities to learn, develop, and succeed to his or her fullest capacity. Canterbury Elementary goals are that through quality instruction and curriculum Canterbury students will master skills that are basic to life, develop responsible attitudes, develop a sense of self-respect, respect for those around them and display continuous academic and social growth.

Also Named for Inclusion

Beech Street School is unique to New Hampshire as 50% of their population are English language learners. There are many programs available to help keep these students and others in the school. Students can come to the school to get help with their reading at 7:30 a.m. or stay until 5:30 p.m. to receive additional help with reading or math. There are 21st Century Programs, Parks and Recreation Programs, Jump Start and homework clubs, to name a few. During the day there is small group help in reading and math for students that are below, on or above grade level. Because of this the school has shown continued improvement over time. They also have teachers and leaders that are vested in the students at Beech Street School, that is where they choose to teach.

Chichester Central School is a rural K-8 school with 250 students. Chichester's Response to Intervention (RTI) Model includes regular and systematic assessment of student progress, tiered levels of targeted instruction, and monthly meetings in which a classroom teacher and interventionists meet together to review the data of each child to insure that growth is taking place. RTI is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and/or intervention matched to student needs and using learning rate over time and level of performance to make important educational decisions. All students are screened (tested) at the beginning, middle, and end of the year so that bench-marks can be established. In addition to the general language arts class, teachers will provide direct instruction in small groups as determined by the assessments. They encourage students to demonstrate the best of themselves every moment of everyday and to make positive contributions to their classrooms.

Ledge Street School services children in grades K-5 in Nashua. They are currently a school of approximately 500 students; 80% of whom qualify for free/reduced lunch and 33% of whom are ESOL students. Over the course of the past four years, they have designed a common language for all collaborations and have worked hard to insure that their professionals are working in tandem for the benefit of their students. They have worked hard in the area of instructional consultation to learn the best strategies that can be used for the good of all children. Their gains in NECAP have been noticeable and they are proud of their accomplishments.

Two years ago, they became a "Leader in Me" school, embracing Covey's 7 Habits as staff, students and families. The habits are practiced each day and reflected upon continuously. All students in grades K-5 maintain leadership notebooks indicating their personal and academic goals for time periods as well as work samples and data pieces.

Parental involvement is supported through our connection with Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC). They offer numerous trainings and support to entire families; not just the children. This connection has afforded them resources and professional development in the areas of studying at home, reading for pleasure, and homework help to offer our parents. The results of our most recent school-community index indicate that we have made much progress in these areas with our families.

The Milan Village School is a K-6 school with David Backler as the principal. Technology at the Milan Village School is used to challenge students at their level and depth, engage students in the learning process, create opportunities for students to apply learning, and create collaborative work environments. Social media is used to teach the students at the Milan Village School to be good citizens on the internet. Students use peer assessments and provide feedback within a controlled atmosphere. Mr. Backler has demonstrated substantial innovations in the use of educational technology by using on-line lesson expectations (elementary version of competencies) tied to embedded formative assessments. The school is project based, and has pioneered mentoring with 6th graders leading multi-grade problem-based teams. Last year these teams created GPS guided trails and developed pamphlets that are used by the Milan State Park for hikers.

The National School Boards Association awarded the Magna Award to the **Sanborn Regional School District** in Kingston New Hampshire for its new freshman learning community (FLC). Under the leadership of Assistant Principal Ann Hadwen, Sanborn Regional High School created a learning community within the high school for freshman students to be together with a core group of teachers to include English language arts, social studies, science, mathematics, technology, information literacy, and wellness instructors. This community operates on a rotating schedule within the block schedule of Sanborn Regional High School. Embedded in this rotation is flexible grouping time to provide students with a weekly re-teach and enrichment period to intervene and support students and monitor progress. All students take math at the same time during the day, in an uninterrupted ninety minute block. The entire math department is involved in math instruction for freshman during this time.

Following the Professional Learning Community model, the FLC teachers have developed common team norms, goals, common grading practices for class work and homework, grading policies, integrated units, performance-based assessments, and communication to parents. Early data shows that course failures have dropped dramatically in courses that are associated with the team. Discipline issues are sharply reduced from the 2008-2009 school year. Instruction, designed to meet individual student needs, is showing promise of meeting the challenge set forth by the Sanborn Regional School Board when they adopted a single goal for the school district - to become a top 10 percent school district, based on a variety of indicators.